

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-16, and 34-38 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 2 and 37 have been currently amended. The below comments present in greater detail distinctive features of applicants' claimed invention over the cited art that were conveyed to the Examiner over the telephone on October 25, 2007.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 1-3, 5-7, 11, 13 and 34-38 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1-3, 5-7, 11, 13 and 34-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Knight *et al.* (U.S. 6,493,703). Knight *et al.* does not teach each and every element of the claimed subject matter as recited in the subject claims.

A single prior art reference anticipates a patent claim only if it expressly or inherently describes *each and every limitation* set forth in the patent claim. *Trintec Industries, Inc. v. Top-U.S.A. Corp.*, 295 F.3d 1292, 63 USPQ2d 1597 (Fed. Cir. 2002); *See Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). *The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim.* *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). (emphasis added).

The claimed subject matter relates to systems and methods that facilitate electronic data searching, and more particularly to systems and methods that employ a relevance function(s) to rank search results obtained from the domain of community archives for example, newsgroups. In particular, independent claim 1 recites: *a first component that determines a relevance of respective search results associated with one or more of a Usenet, a discussion thread, a blog, an archived community discussion, or a chat room via one or more feature-based relevance functions wherein features of the function are based at least on one or more global thread properties comprising at least a thread depth defined over a thread comprising at least a message core and a message body, one or more posting-specific thread properties.* Knight *et al.* does not teach or suggest the aforementioned novel aspects of applicants' claimed subject matter.

Knight *et al.* provides for system and method for implementing intelligent online community message board. An online message board monitors message traffic generated by subscribers so that the intelligent decisions can be made concerning what types of content to locate and retrieve, what priority to use for locating such content, how to organize such content for ease of access by the subscribers etc. A series of software robots are used to locate, retrieve and sort the content as derived from other news groups. Subscriber tastes and interests are intelligently monitored so that a relevant content can be located, extracted and presented in accordance with subscriber derived feedback information.

At page 2 of the Final Office Action, Examiner incorrectly asserts that Knight *et al.* teaches *determining relevance of respective search results* associated with one or more of a Usenet, a discussion thread, a blog, an archived community discussion, or a chat room *via one or more feature-based relevance functions wherein features of the function are based at least on one of a one or more of global thread properties, one or more posting-specific thread properties, one or more attributes of a person posting messages or one or more newsgroups*. The cited portion of reference (Knight *et al.*) provides for breaking down and sorting the information into a number of subject areas, which subject areas represent logical collection of content according to a set of service provider or user specific rules, filters, criteria etc (Col. 9, lines 60-65). User is permitted to activate one of the subject matter area query buttons and a detailed subject matter area query menu is presented. Depressing a subject matter area query button, causes the subject matter area query menu to display a number of classifications falling under such group subject matter, such as in the case of a Stock subject matter area query, classifications corresponding to companies sorted alphabetically. For looking under a specific subject matter area like ‘Stocks’, the user can activate a “Custom” subject matter area query button and formulate a new filter or search query based on such subject matter area filtering. In response to the user specified search parameters, a request is sent to community search robot at server which in turn queries database management routine to retrieve entries meeting the user’s search/filter criteria. Because these entries are already indexed according to a predefined subject matter area/class/subclass indices, so a group of the same matching the user’s query criteria are easily and rapidly located. These entries are then transmitted to the user’s computer and presented in abbreviated format like author, date, and excerpt from entry. (Col. 11, lines 32-56). Hence Knight *et al.* provides for breaking down the information content and indexing them according to subject matter, so that a

particular query for a subject matter is easily and rapidly located. **Knight *et al.* provides the user to look into a specific subject matter and formulate the query based on the specific subject matter area filtering.** However Knight *et al.* nowhere teaches or suggests *ranking relevant results* from web communities which are web virtual spaces based on relevance functions *wherein relevance functions recognize relevant search results and are generated based on various features of such web spaces such as global thread properties comprising at least a thread depth defined over a thread comprising at least a message core and a message body.* Such relevance functions are tailored to efficiently and effectively rank search results from the community discussion domains. It allows scoping a discussion thread at different levels. For example, scoping can occur over a message core (*e.g.*, the text of a single message, excluding content included from previous messages), a complete message body, all messages in the thread, all messages in a subtree with this particular posting as root, *etc.* Such aspects are not taught or suggested by Knight *et al.*

Accordingly, applicants' representative respectfully submits that an identical invention as recited in the subject claims is not taught or suggested by Knight *et al.* Therefore this rejection should be withdrawn with respect to claims 1-3, 5-7, 11, 13 and 34-38.

II. Rejection of Claims 8, 9 and 12 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 8, 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knight in view of Official Notice. It is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn for the following reasons. Knight *et al.* does not teach or suggest all the claim features with respect to independent claim 1 (which claims 8, 9 and 12 depend there from). Thus, the claimed subject matter as recited in claims 8, 9 and 12 is not obvious over Knight *et al.* and hence this rejection should be withdrawn.

III. Rejection of Claims 10 and 14-16 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 10 and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Knight in further view of Vanderveldt *et al.* (U.S. 6,266,668). It is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn for the following reasons. As stated *supra*, Knight *et al.* does not teach or suggest all the claim features with respect to independent claim 1 (which claims 10 and 14-16 depend there from). Vanderveldt *et al.* fails to make-up for the aforementioned

deficiencies of the base combination. Thus, the claimed subject matter as recited in claims 10 and 14-16 is not obvious over combination of Knight *et al.* and Vanderveldt *et al.* Hence this rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP594US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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